

It is no longer news that the number of labels and artists in the recently grim musical panorama of underground trance is already excessive. That they revel in creative surface-skimming and taking solace in recycling risk-free formulas has become a recipe for urging (and sadly so) fans and producers alike to look elsewhere for innovation and originality.

Cue ULTRAGROOVE Records' ongoing lineage of high quality work. The Belgrade-based label has showcased, since its inception, an impressive array of genre-busting, subversive and forward-thinking releases as their legion of fans keeps growing. The UG tradition continues with AVANT GARDE (UG 006) - as the title suggests, fans, dj's and promoters can expect the young label's trademark blend of meticulously produced gems with a helping of pulsating clubby thrills and a tempering of psychedelic grit.

ultra groove record

1. Digital Number - Mystic
2. Species - Antichrist
3. Prosper - Atomic
4. Soundformer - Words or Less
5. Alternative Control - Radio Controller
6. Shanti - Green Room
7. Space Vision - Subway Trip
8. Joti Sidhu - Taste It

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GROOVE MUSIC

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1) **Digital Number** - Mystic

Buca (Vector) jumpstart the compilation with Mystic, an expositively combustible amalgamation of melody, rhythm, and technical razzle-dazzle. Blissed out and bedraggled in a sunny spell of warm melodic bliss, Mystic's feelgood factor is waylaid by sumptuous pad ritornellos. Sweetened by a tinge of trance nostalgia, this is an excellent down-tempo plot-thickener that builds up a head of steam and passes the baton to the next blasting track in the sequence.

2) **Species** - Antichrist

As usual, labelhead Aki's project Species offers a monster track adorned with tweaks and glitched-out acrobatics. Scattershot shrapnels of sound and rhythm collide in complex simplicity as the dancefloor explodes - yes, it is a Species track. Eerie moods accompany fat, clubby elements, while the serpentine arrangement comes complete with twists and imbrogli, all sheathed into a massive, crystal-clear mixdown. Species is without a doubt one of the artist with the widest arcs in terms of innovation and sound engineering know-how.

3) **Prosper** - Atomic

Over the years, Nikolai has constantly evolved his sound to what it is today: massive, clean, and exquisitely danceable. Atomic is simple and elegant, colored by clubby chords and percussive inertia, with a killer bassline to boot. Each element is introduced with nonchalance and without any half measures, rendering its arrangement quite linear but inexorably explosive and satisfyingly loud.

4) **Soundformer** - Words or Less

Lakac's Words or Less is a 'battlefield' track that gathers pace inexorably in full-throttle UG-centric feel, offering a sensory attack replete with muzzle flashing & recoils of rapidfire synth. The blasting hurly burly of the no-holds barred arrangement will without a doubt wreak all manner of havoc on the dance floor, making this track a fine example of an Ultragroove audio rampage.

5) **Alternative Control** - Radio Controller

AVANT GARDE continues its breakneck pace with Alt Ctrl's Radio Controller. Its funkadelic, ultragroovy shufflery works wonders on the danceability factor, making this a sure-shot weapon of choice for many dj's this summer. In the simplicity of the story that unfolds lies depth and nuance. The elements swerving about are few, but of hefty proportions, and very effective in making this a sleek and compelling track.

6) **Shanti** - Green Room

Shanti Matkin (aka Krome Angels) graces AVANT GARDE with a powerhouse track that shines with unbounded musical approach. The playful allure of Green Room's tongue-in-cheek bassline reflects Shanti's innovative, wayward originality, while the audio acrobatics further adorn a meticulous arrangement where technical wizardry and delightful groove are all in check. A gargantuan tour de force of fizz, zing, and gusto, a' la Ibiza.

7) **Space Vision** - Subway Trip

The Sao Paulo-based project once again shows the rest of the world that Brazil is indeed one of the global hubs for e-music. Sonically clad in a fat, straight bass continuum that accompanies gravity and grit, Space Vision's track boasts some very pleasant bursts of good ol' festival-friendly full-on psytrance. Clubby elements occasionally flicker between the beats making this a very welcome addition to AVANT GARDE.

8) **Joti Sidhu** - Taste It

We close this impressive release with a slick number from veteran Joti Sidhu joining forces with Celli (Earthling) and dj Mack. Taste It is perfectly aligned with the current dance floors' appreciation of a more club-centred feel, starting with its fat, square-waveform bass. A seguing dialogue of synth slashes, vocal samples and groovy bongos paint broad strokes throughout the quirky track. Cranking volume, pace and inertia to blasting heights, it is the perfect track to close AVANT GARDE and offer a final reminder to always think outside the box.

